

speakers have been making. This chart shows the involvement of the Federal Government with regard to dollars, and it also reflects the issue with regard to their involvement with regulation and the like.

From 1966 up to 2000, as the Federal Government became more involved, dollars spent increased. And as the years have gone on, what is the result of that, basically a flat or no increase in education.

Two points, one point on the issue of accountability, and the other on new approaches. In the area of accountability, the question we have to ask is accountable to whom? The gentleman from Illinois made my case for me when she said that she was concerned about her kids and therefore she decided to run for the local school board.

I would suggest that the best place to get accountability is just as she did, locally, from the local school board, teachers, principals and the like. If you ask most parents who is a local teacher, they will know. If you ask who is the local principal, they will know. Ask most parents who is the Secretary of Education in Washington or the bureaucrats down here making the rules, they unfortunately will not have a clue. And yet what we have been doing over the last several decades is having them have greater accountability and responsibility than the teacher and the principal.

The second point is the approaches. I agree with the ranking member on this in that it is great that we have so many new approaches tried in schools across the country. The problem is when you get to a Federal level, two things happen. Sometimes you potentially nationalize some of these, and that is good if you pick out the good ones. But if you happen to pick out some of the bad ones, such as whole language in California, and that had a dismal track record and result, you can end up having a terrible effect on the entire national education system.

My second point is, and the ranking member made a good point on this, Washington doesn't move as quickly as local school boards. Sometimes it takes 5 years or more to reauthorization and even more years to get something done in the district. We can move more quickly at the end of the day.

I conclude with this. Accountability to whom, it should be accountable to the local teachers and the principals, not to somebody in Washington.

New approaches, it is better to be done locally. And as we move forward and move to reauthorize No Child Left Behind, I just throw out a modest, simple proposal, allow those States who need the Federal Government to tell them and dictate to them how to run their schools and so forth to stay in No Child Left Behind. But allow those States who have parents or community leaders or principals who feel that they can get it done by themselves without the Federal Government, allow those

States to opt out, but also to keep their own tax dollars in that State so they can decide how their education money will be spent.

Mr. McKEON. I am happy to yield to another member of the committee, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Souder).

Mr. Souder. I thank the ranking member, and I just wanted to share a few thoughts.

Many of us on the Republican side have been involved with education for many years. It was my first choice when I was elected in 1994 to go on the Education Committee, much to the shock of everybody on our side. And it has been a challenge because I believe education is the responsibility of the States and local; and yet I passionately believe in the importance of education.

I don't know how we are going to compete in the international marketplace if we don't compete on math and science, and if we don't have everybody at basic reading levels where they have an opportunity to blossom. If they don't know how to read, they will not be able to learn how to compete in a worldwide marketplace.

And frankly we are not going to do it with cheap labor. We have to do it with value-added labor. We have to have education at the core of any system that we have. The challenge we have in the Federal Government is that the State and local seem to not want to raise their taxes. They don't want to do the funding. They want to come to the Federal Government for the money, and then they don't want any strings with the money.

If you ask the Federal Government for money, you are going to get strings. Many of us want to minimize those strings where the thousands of flowers bloom, but we are still going to have measurement.

I was one who didn't like the national testing idea because I am afraid that a national curriculum is going to be abused by either side to try to drive their ideological agendas. Nevertheless, there has to be some kind of measurement. We need some measurement. If we keep increasing Federal aid to education, then we need to increase accountability.

In the parts of No Child Left Behind that are difficult, I know the administration likes to ask, Well, which child would you leave behind? But the problem is if your goal is just to focus on those who are going to be at the lower echelons, we have diverted money to minimal gains in some cases at that level, and backed off in our math and science and in our upper and middle end to the net result that we haven't really moved the system.

Nobody argues that No Child Left Behind hasn't made tremendous progress at the lower echelons. Part of the question that schools are legitimately asking right now with the special needs kids, with English as a second language kids, how can they meet continually higher standards? At some point we are more likely to get slower progress or

hit a wall, and we are trying to work that through with any new bill.

But there are going to be measurements, and measurements are never completely fair. But he who pays the piper picks the tune. To this degree, you want more money from the Federal Government, you are going to get more regulation. We need to be responsible.

I hear people say, My daughter is a teacher. She gets frustrated with this because they have to teach to the test. That is partly why I have a concern about the test. I went to an amazing school in New Orleans that got hit by Hurricane Katrina. It is a 100 percent school lunch program, and nobody is failing to pass the test.

I asked, Do you teach to the test? She said, No, these are principles that we should have been teaching anyway. So if we teach the principles, they will pass the test.

What we are really commenting on, is the test measuring what we want to have, and is that the skill. And if the test is in fact measuring that, then you aren't teaching to the test. But it needs to be fair. Schools with high ESL, schools with high special needs kids are going to need accountability.

I thank you for your time and your leadership.

Mr. McKEON. Let me just say No Child Left Behind I think has made a good improvement for the purpose that it was originally passed for. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was passed in 1965 to help, as was stated earlier, the have-nots, to help them get up to where the haves are.

The test scores show that since No Child Left Behind has been put in, we have the highest testing for African American and Hispanic children in the history of the testing. A lot of things have been misunderstood about NCLB. What it was was a law that said we want kids to learn basic math and we want them to learn to read, and the States set the standards and implement the bills. Some States went much further, and the Federal Government got blamed for what we actually did. The important thing is that we get it reauthorized, that we fix the problems that have been mentioned many times here tonight.

I thank the Speaker for his patience, and those who have been listening, I thank them and I think we will follow up with another one of these because there is much more to be said about education and the reauthorization of the ESEA, better known recently as No Child Left Behind.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, with the enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act, NCLB, our nation made a commitment to closing the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers and to changing the culture of America's schools so that all students receive the support and high-quality instruction they need to meet higher expectations.

The critical part of this challenge, at the high school level, is reducing the number of young